

# WHERE GOD LIVES

THE SCIENCE OF  
THE PARANORMAL  
AND HOW OUR  
BRAINS ARE LINKED  
TO THE UNIVERSE

MELVIN MORSE, M.D.  
with PAUL PERRY

Authors of the *New York Times* bestseller *Closer to the Light*

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WHERE  
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OTHER BOOKS BY  
MELVIN MORSE, M.D.,  
WITH PAUL PERRY

Closer to the Light: Learning  
from Children's Near-Death  
Experiences

Transformed by the Light: The  
Powerful Effect of Near-Death  
Experiences on People's Lives

Parting Visions: Uses and Meanings  
of Pre-Death, Psychic, and  
Spiritual Experiences

*To Trish*

—Melvin Morse

*To all the wonderful people who have  
contributed to our books with their thoughts,  
letters, and stories. We thank you.*

—Paul Perry

## ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

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Paul Perry took the seven or eight hundred chaotic, disorganized, rambling pages of material I sent him and turned it into the fine-tuned machine that this book is. I am probably the only person who

truly understands his genius in taking complex scientific concepts and making them seem simple. This is the fourth book we have written together and far and away our best.

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My income is from my private practice of medicine. I do not have the pressures of conforming to tenure committees and the irrational skepticism often seen in the academic world, as my patients provide me with my income. Any contributions I have made toward understanding human consciousness have come about because my patients trust me with the care of their children. I am first and foremost a pediatrician.

I could not have written this book without the support of my family: my wife, Allison, and my children, Bridget, Colleen, Brett, Cody, and Michaela.



My mother, Gertrude Morse, started my interest in near death studies by introducing me to Bruce Greyson, the acknowledged father of near death research. Bruce has been my mentor and my inspiration.

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## INTRODUCTION

# Simple Prayers, Complex Results

A miracle is not the breaking of laws, nor is it a phenomenon outside of laws. It is laws that are incomprehensible and unknown to us, and are therefore miraculous.

—Gurdjieff

**I**N 1997, NEUROSCIENTISTS FROM THE UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA at San Diego bravely proclaimed that they had found an area of the human brain that “may be hard-wired to hear the voice of heaven.” In specially designed research, they found that certain parts of the brain—the right temporal lobe, to be exact—were attuned to ideas about the supreme being and mystical experiences. They called this area “the God Module” and said it was “dedicated machinery for religion.”

Many scientists were excited by the research. One, Craig Kinsley, a neuroscientist at the University of Richmond, in Virginia, even declared, “There is a quandary of whether the mind created God or God created the mind. This is going to shake people up.”

I knew what he meant. In three other books, I had already identified the right temporal lobe as the place where man interfaces with God. It is this area, an area I call “the God Spot,” that is an area of untapped and unlimited potential where God lives in each of us. This region is instrumental in facilitat-

ing mind-body healing. It is responsible for visions as well as psychic powers and vivid spiritual experiences.

In short, the right temporal lobe allows us to interact actively with the universe.

Although the events of a near death experience, or NDE, represent what is thought to be our final communication and interaction with the universe, that couldn't be further from the truth. NDEs are simply spiritual experiences that occur while we are dying. What we learn from studying NDEs is that we have the biological potential to interact with the universe at any time during our lives. In order to do so, we just have to learn how to activate the right temporal lobe, the place where God lives.

As a practicing pediatrician with an interest in near death studies, I have seen what happens when this area is activated in children who have had NDEs. I have also seen how these children are affected in the years following their brush with death. Not only are these children better balanced in their physical and mental lives, but they are better balanced spiritually. They eat better food, do better in school, and are more mature than most of their peers. They are aware of a connection with the universe that most other kids don't even know exists. They feel a purpose in living, and they don't fear that death is the "end of it all." They trust their intuitions and feel they can connect again with the divine presence they saw when they nearly died, *without having nearly to die again*.

"Once you've seen the light on the other side, you can see it again if you try," said one of my young patients. "It is always there for you."

## WHERE IS IT?

Don't look for the God Spot in an anatomy book. Modern medical science does not officially recognize this area of the

brain, or any other area, for that matter, as the God Spot. In fact, standard textbooks of neurology describe the function of the right temporal lobe as that of processing and interpreting memories and emotions. In *Where God Lives*, the right temporal lobe will be shown to function as a “paranormal” area, which gives us such abilities as mind-body healing, telepathy, and the ability to communicate with God. Since these abilities are paranormal, they are controversial. So it naturally follows that there is no official medical recognition of the God Spot or anything else like it.

How could this be? How could we, for thousands of years, ignore something as important as the ability to interact with God? The simple answer would be that we are in the “spiritual dark ages” and have yet to evolve out of them. The history of humankind is filled with such intellectual blind spots. The Chinese invented the compass, but not for travel. Rather, they used this amazing instrument to align their homes geographically, for mystical reasons. The Mayans invented the wheel, but used it only for children’s toys. It wasn’t for many years that other cultures discovered additional uses for these inventions and used them to change the course of history. It will be a long time before Western medicine acknowledges an area of the brain that interacts with the universe, despite research by respectable institutions. Even though doctors act on intuition with this area of the brain every day in their medical practices, most deal with the “mind-body connection” as a concept rather than a reality. An actual God Spot? No way.

## I WAS ONE OF THEM

Of course, I understand why most Western-trained medical doctors don’t acknowledge the God Spot as an anatomical area. After all, I went to medical school at Johns Hopkins University, one of America’s bastions of medical education. Had

one of us even considered proposing something so nebulous and out of the mainstream as an area of the brain that interacts with God, we would not have been taken seriously.

My strict medical training led me to deny the existence of such an amazing area of the brain. Even when I started studying near death experiences and focused on interviewing hundreds of children who had nearly died, I had trouble believing everything I was hearing. I interviewed children who had left their dead bodies on emergency room tables and "floated" to the waiting room to visit with their concerned families. Later, they were able to recall conversations and scenes that they could not possibly have witnessed in their comatose state.

Still, I had trouble accepting the reality of the near death experience, largely because my strict scientific training made me suspicious of unexplained events. I was like a man who reads books about surviving in the wilderness but has never actually camped out at night to put those skills to work.

Then, one day, I saw the light. I was speaking to a group of electroencephalographers, people who use EEG machines, when one of the technicians asked, "How can you stimulate your right temporal lobe?"

I responded technically, telling her about a neurologist who used electricity to stimulate the right temporal lobe artificially. In the middle of my response she impatiently interrupted, "No, I mean how can you do it naturally?"

I shrugged and said the first thing that came into my mind. "I guess that's what people do when they pray."

## TASTE OF MY OWN MEDICINE

I never thought to try this time-tested method of right-temporal-lobe stimulation, this thing called "prayer," myself. I was like most doctors who rarely taste the medicine they dis-

pense. I kept it at a distance, using it to explain my work but never praying in my own life. I can honestly say that I had never truly prayed until I was forty years old.

Almost on a dare, I decided to take a leap of faith. My leap happened during the publicity tour for our third book, *Parting Visions*. Book tours are fast-paced events in which authors often run from interview to interview. The relentless pace is monitored by a media escort who specializes in getting authors from one interview to the next. It is a mind-numbing exercise, answering the same questions over and over again, trying to summarize such a complex topic as spiritual visions into three or six minutes or whatever time bite before the next commercial break. Book tours are tough duty, but they have value beyond just selling books. For one thing, they give me an opportunity to learn firsthand how people feel about my research.

One of these opportunities came in the Midwest, where I was picked up at the airport by a media escort whose husband had recently died of cancer. It was one of those days during which nothing seems to go right. Several radio stations canceled their interviews with me, and I was left to do nothing but kill time with my media escort.

She was deeply religious and had no doubt whatsoever that there was life after death. Her terminally ill husband had true spiritual visions of another life, she said, and she saw his visions as an affirmation of her lifelong faith. She treasured, rather than feared, his final moments of life.

"How do we connect to God?" she asked.

I told her my theory of the God Spot, and how I now realized that it could be "turned on" in a number of ways besides near death or actually dying. I mentioned a number of studies in which the right temporal lobe had been stimulated and

spiritual experiences “turned on” as a result. I also mentioned that “true prayer” could turn it on. “But,” I said, “I am not sure what ‘true prayer’ really is.”

“You must know what it is,” she said. “You have never prayed?”

I had to answer, honestly, that I had not. I prayed when my dad had cancer, but I felt that it was just a way of expressing extreme anxiety. Even though I attended Hebrew school as a child, the prayers we said there seemed to be the meaningless chanting of ancient writings.

I had no trouble with the pursuit of science as a sort of religion. Although much of my work had involved leaps of faith, they were calculated leaps backed up by scientific research that made them very short and safe. But religion, I told this woman, was on the other side of a gap that was too wide for me to cross.

“Perhaps,” she said. “But I didn’t ask you if you were religious. I asked if you have ever prayed. Don’t you think prayer and religion can be two different things?”

I had never thought of them separately, I said, but I saw how prayer and religion could be used together or separately as the gateway to spirituality. I also mentioned that religion is frequently used as a method of control rather than a means of freeing one’s soul.

“Don’t think about all of the bad that has happened as a result of religion,” she said. “Just think about the creator of the universe and about trying to touch that power. Just get on your knees and talk to God. If you do it right, maybe God will respond.”

I laughed, then said, “Well, maybe I will try it.”

“Promise me that you’ll try it tonight.”

“Okay,” I promised. “I’ll try it tonight.”



## PROMISE KEPT, QUESTION ASKED

Later that night, as promised, I knelt at the foot of my bed. It didn't feel as dumb as I thought it would. I thought lovingly about each of my children, laughed about something each of them had said, and thanked God for them. I thought of my wife and how lucky I was to have someone who could put up with my devotion to the practice of medicine. I prayed for the health of my patients and that I would have the insight to help them. And then I decided to ask God a question. I asked, "What is the nature of God, and what is the relationship between God and man?"

I know my prayer seemed contrived, but I was acting with a completely open heart. In the end, I sincerely and openly prayed for about five minutes that night. I followed the formula my escort had outlined for me, a few minutes thanking God for my blessings, a few minutes praying for others, and then my question.

To make my experiment with prayer more scientific, I included in my prayer that I had to have the answer within a twenty-four-hour period. That way there would be a clear end point, and I wouldn't have to wonder if events during the next several days could be interpreted as God's answer to my question.

The next day I got up early and flew to Los Angeles, where I faced a busy schedule of radio and TV appearances. By mid-afternoon I had completely forgotten about my prayer experiment. When I got to the hotel that evening, exhausted, I got my answer. Filled with pent-up energy, and pacing around my hotel room, I was suddenly surrounded by an incredible light that gave me a sense of peace, calm, and love.

I knew what it was immediately. The slight hiss I had been hearing in my ear all day from clenching my jaw muscles was gone. In fact, all sound was gone. I felt immersed in a sweet,